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USSR-POLAND: Impact of Recent Demonstrations

The Soviets are pleased that no greater disruption occurred last week, but they appear to have gained a more sober appreciation that solving Poland's problems will be a long and difficult process.

Soviet media had prepared the public for the possibility of violence in Poland on the second anniversary of the formation of Solidarity and commended the government's forces for their swift repression of "hooligan elements."

Subsequent Soviet comment, however, has acknowledged that "counterrevolution" in Poland has "by no means exhausted its potential." Soviet officials in Moscow told a visiting Western politician late last month that the Poles probably would not emerge from their crisis until 1990, although economic "normalization" might be complete as early as 1986.

Comment: While the Soviets probably are disturbed that the martial law regime has not been able entirely to prevent active expressions of opposition, there is no indication this has affected their general satisfaction with Premier Jaruzelski's performance. The Soviets almost certainly want him to tighten security even further, to be tougher in dealing with the Church, and to proceed slowly in rebuilding trade unions.

Soviet media took note of the participation of young people in the clashes last week and have said Moscow regards the solution of the youth problem as an important task of a revitalized party. Soviet officials may make these points explicitly to Foreign Minister Olszowski when he visits Moscow early next week.

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